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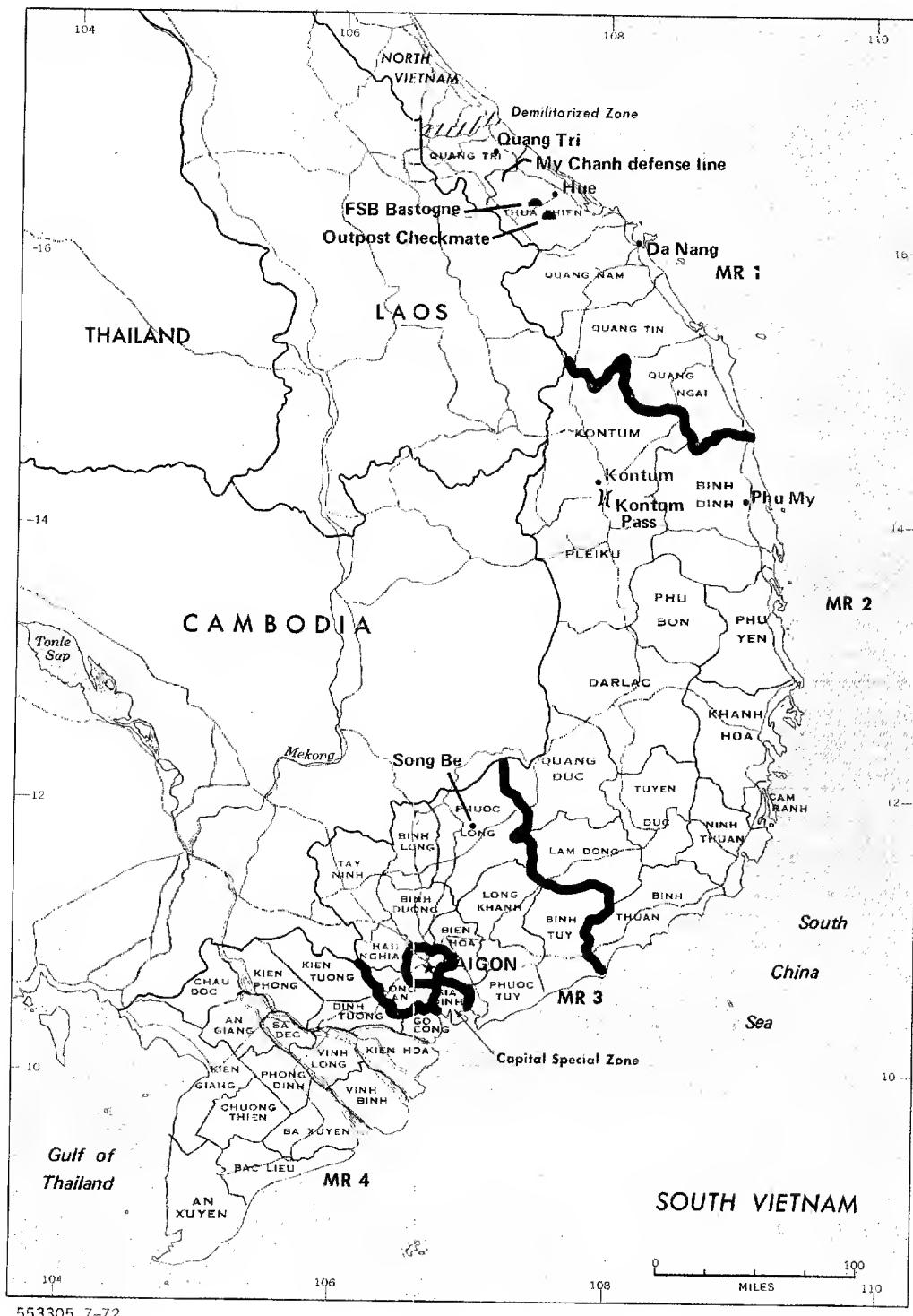
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C VIETNAM: The Communists are increasing their pressure against government positions in the northern provinces. South Vietnamese paratroopers remain stalled south of Quang Tri City as heavy weekend rains and increasingly stiff resistance hamper the government's campaign.

Heavy enemy artillery attacks along with some ground probes hit paratroop units spread out west of Route 1 over the weekend, with the bulk of fighting reported just above the My Chanh defense line. To the south, the Communists yesterday shelled Hue for the first time since the enemy offensive began but casualties and damage were light, with most of the 122-mm. artillery rounds hitting near South Vietnamese Army positions in the Citadel and at Camp Eagle to the south.

Heavy mortar barrages also hit government positions in the Fire Support Base Bastogne area southwest of Hue. In the central highlands, Communist forces in the Kontum Pass area south of Kontum City may be pulling back; military convoys began moving unimpeded through the pass on 30 June--the first time since it was closed last April.

Sporadic shelling attacks and some ground action continued elsewhere in the country but little hard fighting developed. The Communists did, however, mount their first major actions in Phuoc Long Province over the weekend, destroying a government ammunition depot and also a communications facility near the provincial capital of Song Be.

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DISARMAMENT: Signs of Soviet flexibility may be increasing the pressure for some movement on chemical weapons (CW) limitations at the Geneva disarmament talks. For the second time since the talks resumed, Soviet representatives have said that they wish to give high priority to CW and are prepared to consider a partial ban on such weapons. Several nonaligned delegations have now made it clear that they are not interested in additional explorations of technical issues and will therefore introduce their own CW proposals sometime after 5 July. These proposals, billed as "compromises," are likely to lean toward the earlier Soviet preference for total elimination of chemical weapons, but modified to provide for implementation in stages. [redacted]

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USSR: Yesterday the Soviets deorbited Cosmos 496, an unmanned Soyuz spacecraft. The satellite was launched on 26 June, probably to test design changes made after last year's Soyuz 11 tragedy in which three cosmonauts were killed. Soviet scientists are likely to examine closely the results of the mission before proceeding with a pending manned space event. The coming event probably will involve the rendezvous, docking, and extended stay in orbit of a manned Soyuz spacecraft and Salyut space station. [redacted]

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